

ERIE-NIAGARA REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP
INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND REGIONAL GROWTH
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Memorandum

To: Co-Chairs Clyde Burmaster & Barry Weinstein, MD

From: Government Affairs Subcommittee Chair Peter McMahon

Re: June & July 2004 meetings

Date: July 30, 2004

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership's Government Affairs Subcommittee met June 16 and July 7, 2004 at the UB Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth. Present for the June meeting were subcommittee members McMahon, Allen, Doolittle, Ellis, Meal, Weinstein, and Sheffer. Present for the July meeting were subcommittee members McMahon, Allen, Anello, Doolittle, Ellis, Meal, Weinstein, and Sheffer, as well as Graham Smith from the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise and Paul Belanger from the UB Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth.

Electronic Permitting:

At the May 21 general meeting, the ENRP approved the sending of letters to request Erie County to take whatever steps are necessary to bring electronic permitting live, and for ENRP to request that Niagara County offer an appropriate financial contribution to bring e-permitting live in that county. Those letters were sent as requested. Progress was detailed in both counties. Erie County is in the process of extending its contract with the Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth for a year (retroactive to April 1) to continue managing the site, which would be followed by a transition to the county.

Niagara and Erie Counties have reached agreement on the costs for Niagara municipalities to become involved in the project. It is estimated that the UB Institute could add a municipality for a one-time fee of \$1,000 per municipality and the price for data input if UB provided this service would not exceed \$800. The municipality would have the option to perform the data entry themselves or contract with UB. Erie County would charge Niagara County an annual maintenance fee of \$1,500, the same fee being charged for GIS services.

Some members suggested that the Institute would be a better place to permanently house the site. To coincide with the Erie County budget process, the subcommittee will take a closer look at the long-term future of the project at its October meeting.

Regional Economic Development Database/Outreach:

Approval was granted at the May 21 general meeting to organize an educational forum in conjunction with the Buffalo Niagara Enterprise on the REDD for local officials, with a follow-up letter soliciting sites from the municipalities to be considered for inclusion on the REDD and Site Finder. While some in the subcommittee felt that REDD should be invisible to the outside world and all efforts should be focused on advertising the BNE as the face of the economic development process, the majority felt that it would be useful for local officials to be aware of the tools used in said process.

The subcommittee also decided to broaden the focus of the outreach sessions to include the BNE's role in economic development, the Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS), the county IDAs, and ENRP. All these, plus REDD and Site Finder, will be presented in the context of the economic development process for the region. To illustrate this point, one cohesive presentation will be made on all topics. The involved parties have scheduled a meeting for August 9 to begin work on this presentation, with outreach sessions targeted for the two counties in the fall.

Other Topics:

Other topics discussed include the Buffalo Niagara Partnership's brownfields conference, the recent regionalism forum hosted by Kevin Gaughan, the Regional Economic Development Strategy, and the ECIDA's cluster analysis.